M1941

RECORDS CONCERNING THE CENTRAL COLLECTING POINTS ("ARDELIA HALL COLLECTION"): OMGUS HEADQUARTERS RECORDS, 1938–1951

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INTRODUCTION

On the 45 rolls of this microfilm publication, M1941, are reproduced the general records, activity reports, and restitution and custody receipts of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section as distributed to the Headquarters of Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany) [OMGUS]. The MFAA transferred Nazi-looted works of art and artifacts from various storage areas and shipped the objects to one of four U.S. central collecting points. In order to research restitution claims, the MFAA officers gathered intelligence reports, interrogation reports, captured documents, and general information regarding German art looting. This microfilm publication includes a small portion of the records that comprise the "Ardelia Hall Collection." The entire collection is located in the Records of United States Occupation Headquarters, World War II, Record Group (RG) 260.

BACKGROUND

The basic authority for taking custody of property in Germany was contained in Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) Directive 1067/6, which directed the U.S. Zone Commander to "impound or block" certain specified categories of property, including those of the German Reich; the Nazi Party and affiliated organizations and their prominent members; and absentee owners of non-German nationality, including United Nations and neutral governments and individuals. The American Zone Commander was also required to impound all property that was transferred under duress or through wrongful acts of confiscation, disposition, or spoliation, and to block the relocation of works of art and cultural material of value or importance, regardless of its ownership. When the U.S. Army entered Germany in September 1944, provisions were made for the seizure of all categories of property, including that of the Nazi Party organization.

At the cessation of hostilities in May 1945, a number of temporary collecting points were set up by the 12th Army Group to store all cultural objects found in the U.S. zone in need of preservation or suspected of having been looted by the Germans. The seized property was turned over to the custody of the Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany) [OMGUS] when it became the successor to the U.S. Group Control Council, Germany (USGCC) on October 1, 1945. OMGUS was responsible for administering the U.S. zone of occupation and U.S. sector of Berlin, and for functioning as U.S. element of organizations comprising the Allied Control Authority, the name given to the four-power occupation control system.

Within OMGUS, the seized works of art eventually came under the control of the Property Division. The Property Division, established in March 1948, was created as the result of a reorganization of OMGUS functions related to finance, the economy, transport, communications, restitution, reparations, decartelization, and property control. The primary responsibility of the Property Division was to formulate and implement policies required in the fields of property control, German external assets, internal and external restitution, and reparations.

By 1946 only four of the collecting points remained and were located in Munich, Wiesbaden, Marburg, and Offenbach. After June 15, 1946, when the Marburg Central Collecting Point was closed, the remaining three central collecting points (CCPs) became specialized.

The Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point held mostly German-owned material, especially that of the former Prussian State Museums, the Staedel Institute of Frankfurt, and the local museums of Wiesbaden, plus a certain amount of internal loot (materials confiscated from German nationals) and objects subject to restitution. At its height, this installation contained approximately 700,000 objects.

The Munich Central Collecting Point specialized largely in materials subject to restitution, although in addition it contained the cultural objects of the Bavarian State Museums. At its height, this central collecting point held in excess of a million objects.

The third of the specialized CCPs, the Offenbach Archival Depot, devoted itself primarily to Jewish religious items, books, and archives. It handled more than 2½ million objects during its four years of operation.

The transition from military to civilian occupation administration was initiated by the Presidential appointment of the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG) who assumed his duties on September 2, 1949. OMGUS organizations were progressively abolished and all functions transferred to HICOG organizations between June and September 1949. The Offenbach Archival Depot was closed in June 1949. Upon the termination of the Property Division on July 1, 1949, the property control functions with respect to the liquidation of claims devolved on the Central German Property Control Agency in Munich. Its directorate was composed of the four Land Civilian Agency Heads in the U.S. zone. The transition was completed by September 21, 1949, the same day of the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany. OMGUS was formally abolished on December 5, 1949.

The Munich and Wiesbaden CCPs closed in August 1951, although some cultural objects remained at both facilities under U.S. control after that date. The Office of Public Affairs of the Office of the High Commissioner for Germany exercised residual restitution authority for these objects. Most of the OMGUS records, including the records of the Property Division, were retired to an Army record center in Kansas City until they were accessioned into the National Archives in the early 1960s.

During the period in which the CCPs operated, they administered the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Sections of Bavaria, Bremen, Hesse, and Württemberg-Baden. They also received policy guidance from the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives Section of OMGUS general headquarters. The composition of the records of the CCPs is unique among the records of OMGUS headquarters. The Offices of Military Government for Bavaria and Hesse created most of the records concerning the CCPs through their restitution and preservation programs from 1945 to 1949, but they also contain records of monuments and fine arts officers assigned to Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and U.S. Forces, European Theater Headquarters; records of Headquarters, Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany)[OMGUS]; records of the Office of the High Commissioner for Germany; and some papers added to various files by the State Department's Arts and Monuments Adviser, Ardelia Hall, while the records were on "loan" to her from 1954 to 1961. Because Ms. Hall worked extensively with these records, which were combined into one body, they are referred to as the "Ardelia Hall Collection."

RECORDS DESCRIPTION

The OMGUS headquarters textual records relating to the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives (MFAA) Section consist of general administrative records, monthly activity reports, and restitution and custody receipts. The records describe the MFAA's activities in the U.S. occupation zone.

The first series, General Records, 1938–48, includes correspondence, memorandums, reports, cultural monument cards, and other forms of documentation relating to a wide variety of art related topics. The most prominent subjects include general information on the German fine arts programs, the status of German monuments and museums, the planning of the monuments and fine arts program in the occupation zone, and German art looting activities during the war. Some records dating before 1945 consist of captured German-language documents. The records in this series are arranged by subject or by

type of record except for the cultural monument cards (on rolls 25–27) that are filed alphabetically by the name of the city, town, or village within three of the U.S. zones (Bavaria, Hesse, and Württemberg-Baden). The cards were color coded to indicate on which list the name of the monument was contained, type of photographic record kept about the monument, and whether it was open to the public. The cards were filmed in color, and the key to the code is filmed at the beginning of each of the eight groups of cards.

The second series, Activity Reports, 1945, is arranged by Army unit and thereunder chronologically by month. This series consists of monthly reports from the Third and Seventh U.S. Armies to the G-5 Civil Affairs Division of SHAEF (Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces) and OMGUS concerning monuments and fine arts activities for 1945.

The third series, Restitution and Custody Receipts, 1945–51, consists of correspondence and receipts for cultural objects restituted to countries, for the return of cultural objects to German institutions, for interzonal exchange of cultural objects, and for the change of custody of cultural objects in the U.S. zone. Lists and descriptions of cultural objects are also included in the shipments and are attached to the receipts. The files are arranged by type of record.

RELATED RECORDS

Textual Records in the National Archives

GENERAL RECORDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, RG 59
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Records Maintained by the Fine Arts and Monuments Adviser, 1945–1961
("Ardelia Hall Collection") (Lot File 62D-4) [A1, Entry 3104A][1]

RECORDS OF THE AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION AND SALVAGE OF ARTISTIC AND HISTORICAL MONUMENTS IN WAR AREAS, 1943–1946, RG 239

RECORDS OF U.S. OCCUPATION HEADQUARTERS, WORLD WAR II, RG 260
Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany) [OMGUS]
Property Division, Reparations and Restitutions Branch
Records of the Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives Section (MFAA), 1946–1948

Property Division, Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points ("Ardelia Hall Collection")
Records of the Marburg Central Collecting Point, 1945–1949
Records of the Munich Central Collecting Point, 1945–1951
Records of the Offenbach Archival Depot, 1946–1951
Records of the Wiesbaden Central Collecting Point, 1945–1952
Miscellaneous Property Reports, 1945–1948

National Archives Accessioned Microfilm

RECORDS OF U.S. OCCUPATION HEADQUARTERS, WORLD WAR II, RG 260
Office of Military Government, U.S. Zone (Germany) [OMGUS]
Property Division, Records Concerning the Central Collecting Points ("Ardelia Hall Collection")

[1] Textual record series designators usually consist of the series title with a date span, the finding aid notation, and the Master Location Register (MLR) entry number, shown here in brackets.

Selected Microfilm Reproductions and Related Records, 1945–1949

National Archives Microfilm Publications

M1782, *OSS Art Looting Investigation Unit Reports, 1945–46*

National Archives Publications

Researchers should also consult *Holocaust-Era Assets: A Finding Aid to Records at the National Archives at College Park, Maryland*, compiled by Greg Bradsher (Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Administration, 1999). This finding aid includes information on specific areas within military records, such as War Department and Occupation records, as well as civilian records, such as those of the State Department, that contain information on looted assets.

Additional information concerning the Holocaust may be located on our web site at *www.archives.gov*.

APPENDIX
LIST OF MONUMENTS AND MUSEUMS INCLUDED ON ROLLS 28–31

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Abterode
Adolfseck
Arolsen
Assenheim
Schloss Augustenau
Bad Homburg
Bergheim
Berlepsch Castle
Biebrich
Birkenau
Braunfels
Breidenstein, Schloss
Budingen
Darmstadt
Echzell
Elberberg von Buttlar
Eltville
Eppstein, Castle
Erfelden
Ernsthofen, Castle
Frankenstein
Frankfurt
Fulda

ROLL 29 MONUMENTS

Gelnhausen
Giessen
Grebenstein
Hanau
Herleshausen
Hersfeld
Heusenstamm Castle
Hochheim
Hohenbuchau, Schloss
Hoeringshausen
Idstein
Johannisberg
Kalkhof
Kassel
Kiedrich
Kranichstein
Kronberg
Langenselbold Castle
Laubach
Lichtenfels
Limburg
Lorch
Marburg
Michelstadt Castle
Neckarsteinach, Schloss Warsberg
Nentershausen
Offenbach/M
Ortenberg
Philippsruhe
Philippsthal, Schloss
Plausdorf
Ramholz, Schloss
Reinhartshausen
Richthof, Schloss
Rudesheim
Rumpenheim
Saalburg
Schonberg
Schonstadt
Seligenstadt
Staden
Trendelburg
Vollrads, Schloss
Weilburg
Welda, Schloss Henschel
Wetzlar
Wiesbaden
Wilhelmshohe
Wilhelmsthal

ROLL 29 MUSEUMS

Amsterdam
Bad Homburg
Braunfels
Brussels
Chicago
Darmstadt
Dresden
Frankfurt, Deutsches Archaeologisches Museum Römisch Germanische Kommission
Frankfurt, Goethe Museum
Frankfurt, Historische/ Museums
Frankfurt, Kunsthand-werk

ROLL 30 MUSEUMS

Frankfurt, Senckenberg
Frankfurt, Städtische Galerie
Frankfurt, Volker- museum
Gersfeld

Grebenstein
Hanau
Herborn and Hersfeld
Hünfeld
Indianapolis
Karlsruhe
Kassel
Korbach
Lauterbach
London
Los Angeles

ROLL 31 MUSEUMS

Milwaukee
Miscellaneous
New York
Offenbach/M
Rotterdam
San Francisco
San Marino, California USA
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St. Louis, Missouri USA
Staatliche Museen Berlin, FL – Kisten (Abschrift)
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	(C5) Goldcup
	(C6) Intelligence
	(C8) NSDAP [National Socialist German Workers' Party], Dissolution of
2	(C9) NSDAP [National Socialist German Workers' Party], Dissolution of Destruction of Monuments
	(C12) Personnel, Control of
	(C22) Works of Art, Control in Germany
	(E8) Reports, Safehaven
	(E9) Summaries, PWE/CSS Daily Intelligence
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Policy – MFA&A [Monument, Fine Arts, and Archives]; USFET [U.S. Forces, European Theater] Directive, 7 July 1945

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Bremen: Monthly report on Monuments, Fine Arts, and Archives, Office of Military Government for Bremen, September 1945
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Receipts for interzonal exchange, 1946–1949
Receipts from Bavaria, October–December 1948
Receipts from Hesse, November 1948
Receipts for materials returned to German Institutions, 1947–1948
Hand receipts (uninventoried)
Loan receipts